

THE SPORTING WORLD

ICE HOCKEY GAINING STRONG FOOTHOLD



TO the Canadians belong two of the most virile sports of modern times—lacrosse and hockey. Uncle Sam has his baseball, England his cricket and Scotland its golf, but to the Canadians must be accorded maternal interest in the first mentioned sports. Uncle Sam does not believe for one minute that his national pastime is an improved form of rounders played by Britons years ago, nor do the people of the Dominion countenance the idea that ice hockey is merely an advanced form of shinny.

Lacrosse by reason of its conflict with baseball does not appear destined to take hold in the United States, and as a matter of fact the base hit and the hunt are making greater inroads every year into the Dominion. Ice hockey, on the other hand, is making steady advancement in this country.

The absence of a really spectacular game to fill in between the close and the opening of the baseball season has been a long felt want, and the establishment of artificial ice rinks in New York, Boston, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, St. Paul and Chicago has paved the way for the introduction of ice hockey and its gradual adoption as one of the most popular of the winter sports.

Weather conditions in this country have militated against ice hockey outdoors, and except in the northern portions of the states the game has been more or less intermittent. The great necessity for the steady growth of hockey has been artificial rinks, and since the tide appears to have set in prospects are bright that in a few years all of the big cities will possess one or more artificial rinks.

So magnetic is the sport in Canada that the leading professionals are paid more in proportion for their services than the diamond heroes on this side of the water. The majority of them are under contract, and compe-

tition for their services is fully as keen as for those of Lajoie, Wagner or Ty Cobb.

The game is played by teams of seven men on each side, and, while the rules in different associations vary slightly, the main points are similar wherever the sport is found. Under the rules of the American Amateur Hockey league in New York the dimensions of the playing area must be not less than 112 by 58 feet, the sides of the rink constituting the side lines and imaginary lines at the two ends forming the goal lines.

The goals are placed in the middle of each goal line, one at each end. The goal is composed of two upright posts, each four feet in height, which are firmly fixed in the ice six feet apart and joined by a strong netting, which is hung at an angle forming a cage. This is all the setting needed for the game, there being no markings such as are found on the gridiron, no foul lines as on the baseball field and no penalty area as in Association football. It is all simple, a sheet of ice with goals at each end, and the arena is ready.

Players on skates armed with hockey sticks, a vulcanized rubber puck and the necessary number of officials make the setting complete. No special restriction is placed on the skates except that they must not be pointed or sharpened in a manner likely to be dangerous to other players, the referee being the judge of these points.

Sticks Resemble Hurling Clubs.

Hockey sticks resemble the hurling club used in Ireland's national game, but are not as heavy. The sticks are flat on the sides, shaped like the old fashioned shiny stick, but being much wider in the blade, the length of which is limited to thirteen inches and the width to three inches. The puck is a disk of rubber one inch in thickness and three inches in diameter.



Hockey Players Practising on Outdoor Rink in Montreal and Two of the Greatest Amateur Players in New York.

ENGLISH COACHING REVIVAL

Following Lead of Vanderbilt, Wealthy Will Drive.

Thanks largely to the initiative and enthusiasm of Alfred G. Vanderbilt, there is a marked revival of the fine old pastime of coaching in London. After three seasons' experience of the Brighton road and its many attractions the noted American whip has decided to continue running the Venture coach down from London to Brighton next season.

Preparations are already well advanced for putting several fresh coaches on the road in the season, to begin on May day next year, for members of the Four-in-hand club and Coaching club are determined to let the world see what can be done with good horses.

Lord Beaconsfield has made arrangements to bring back to the scene of its famous trips of 1888 the Old Times, and it is hoped this famous coach will repeat its past exploits, when the late James Selby drove it to Brighton and back, a distance of 108 miles, in 7 hours 50 minutes. The Hon. P. S. Wyndham is qualified to take the place of his brother on the box when he wants the exhilaration of a spin. This last summer the Old Times ran daily for a couple of months between Brighton and Arundel.

Among other aristocrats interested in the revival of coaching Lord Charles Beresford and Lord Penrhyn will also be occasionally seen as whips next season. Don Miguel Martinez de Hoz, who was second to W. H. Moore in the first coaching Marathon of 1909, is sending more of his Argentine bred hackneys to England, and he will once more be seen on the road. The Chester and Shrewsbury coach is also likely to be put on again. Other revivals of a like nature are under consideration, and American visitors to Britain next summer are likely to have a wide choice of trips in coaches handled by aristocratic whips.

PLAN ASSOCIATION TO PRESERVE GAME.

Because the state of Iowa has failed to use the \$125,000 received through hunters' license the sportsmen of Des Moines and the state are planning to form an association for the purpose of preserving the hunting and fishing in the state.

MANY SUGGESTIONS FOR BASEBALL RULES

Checker, Golf, Poker and Croquet Players Would Change National Pastime

The solons of football have so altered the game that a player who has been away for some years would only recognize his old pastime by the appearance of the ball and the markings of the gridiron. If the two major baseball leagues adopted all the suggestions advanced by rabid fans they would make the revisers of the football code look like pikers. There does not seem to be a single city, town or hamlet which does not contain at least one man who thinks he has an idea that would benefit the game. Those communities where the winning teams are forgotten are satisfied with the present rules. So is the veteran baseball bug of any region. He is a true conservative and resents any talk of change. It is the men who regard baseball as a pastime instead of the sacred science which it is who wish to alter the rules. Suggestions which originate in their fertile brains are first tried out on their friend and then put into literary form and mailed to some innocent newspaper.

The checker player thinks it would be a fine idea if the runner, having completed the circuit of the bases, should have the privilege of a king the moment he touches the home plate and be allowed to run back in the other direction, thus scoring indefinitely until captured.

The golf player suggests that batting be encouraged by the construction of

bunkers in the outfield, into which either the fielders or the ball might fall, thus giving the hitter a better chance of reaching first on a high fly. The poker player believes that the game would be improved if more of the element of bluff were introduced. For instance, if the umpire called a man out on a close decision the runner should be allowed to stand pat and be permitted five minutes in which to bluff the arbitrator out of his opinion. This man also believes that it would be wrong to force a runner off third base. He should be allowed to come in when he wishes.

The croquet player wishes hoops used instead of cushions, the entomologist desires to equip the fielders with butterfly nets, and the cricket player thinks the game should consist of seventy-two full innings, with an intermission after every twelfth inning to allow tea and muffins to be served. Other changes that have been suggested are that the runner be allowed to steal first; that he shall be entitled to four strikes; that he may take his base on three balls; that the foul strike rule be abolished; that the pitcher's box be moved back; that a man be allowed to bat for the pitcher, the latter still remaining in the game, and that the manager be allowed to take players out and send them back into the game whenever he thinks it best.

Next season will probably bring the same old game with the same old rules and the same old crowds containing the same old kippers. The true fan is a curious animal. He can always find plenty of criticism in existing conditions, but if any one else ventures to speak of beneficial changes the fan is the first to cry him down.

WILLIE HOPPE'S STRONG HOLD ON HIS BILLIARD TITLES

No One in Sight Capable of Taking Away "Boy Wonder's" Balk Line Honors.

By TOMMY CLARK.

HOW long will Willie Hoppe retain his billiard honors? This question is now uppermost in the minds of the cue enthusiasts. Finding a suitable opponent for the world's 18.1 and 18.2 balk line champion is just as hard as looking around for a man capable of relieving Jack Johnson of his pugilistic honors. Hoppe has defeated every cue artist of note during the last year, and with no one in sight able to make the holder of the two titles extend himself it looks as if it will be many years before he is dethroned.

The youthful master of the cue began the 1910 season with no titles dangling to his belt, but closed it the champion at both 18.1 and 18.2 balk line and in so doing incidentally placed to his credit the world's record for 18.1 with a high run of 155 and an average of 33.5-15 for 500 points. Till last year the best average was 31, made by Frank Ives in 1897, while the high run of 149 was made by the same player.

Calvin Demarest was the champion 18.2 with the opening of the year. George Sutton holding the title at the more difficult style of 18.1. Hoppe was without a title through differences with the firm that controls billiards in this country, which placed him outside of the professional game. This matter was adjusted, and experts predicted that in due time he would gather to himself the crown at both 18.1 and 18.2.

In the meantime Demarest was defeated for the 18.2 championship by Harry Cline of Philadelphia in Chicago Feb. 3 by 1,500 to 1,387. Hoppe got his opportunity at Sutton for the 18.1 title in Chicago on March 16, winning 500 to 228. He grabbed Cline's laurels from him at the 18.2 balk line in New York on May 25, the score being 500 to 294, thus making him the champion of both styles of play.

George Slosson met Hoppe in a championship match for the 18.1 title in New York on Dec. 1 and 2, the latter easily taking the veteran into camp by 1,000 points to 471. It was on the first night of this play that Hoppe made his record of 23.1-3 average.

In a match with Orn Morningsstar in Pittsburgh on Feb. 3, 4 and 5 for 1,500 points Hoppe made a world's record at 18.2 in averaging 31.4 to an inning, lowering the previous mark of 27 average. Some authorities dispute this record.

While Hoppe has won matches all over the world and played before the nobility abroad, nothing pleases him more than the fact that he has been entertained by the president of the United States and has grasped the hand of the genial Mr. Taft. An added distinction is that Hoppe is the first man who ever showed the official family in the White House the mysteries of the cue and the ivory.

It was on New Year's eve that President Taft gathered together his family and the cabinet members and their wives and invited Willie Hoppe to play billiards for them.

"I had played in many championships where large sums were involved as well as the championship," said Hoppe recently, "but I never before experienced the nervousness which I felt when giving the exhibition before the president."

Mr. Taft, however, made the "boy wonder," as Hoppe is known, feel at home by saying:

"My young man, just consider me an ordinary citizen tonight, for I want you to feel at ease and not get nervous."

As soon as Hoppe got his favorite cue in hand and started the ivorys rolling he says the nervousness vanished, and never did the youth play

more brilliantly than in the game with his manager, Burton Mank, when he ran 100 points, 18.2 balk line. Congressman Nicholas Longworth, son-in-law of Colonel Roosevelt, was Hoppe's next opponent, and, although the Ohio statesman plays a good game, he proved an easy victim for the champion.

But it was Hoppe's exhibition of fancy shots which pleased President Taft most. He closely followed the geometrical problems which Hoppe solved with his deft touch and was not satisfied until he tried several himself. It was after he had found how really difficult they were that Mr. Taft expressed his astonishment.

Miss Helen Taft and Mrs. Longworth also tried several of the fancy shots and seemed unwilling to believe that the ivorys, which seemed to do Hoppe's every bidding, rolled aimlessly about when they tried to send them down the side rail in a single procession.

In speaking of the game of billiards recently Hoppe declared that the bridge is the most important part of the sport.

Every man starting to learn the game, he says, should first study his bridge and learn to use it so that the bridge hand never will become cramped.

In telling of the proper uses of the bridge and strokes Hoppe said:

"I have often been asked why such a small minority of the vast army of persons who find amusement and recreation playing different styles of billiards ever attain proficiency at the game. The answer is simple. They start wrong. And, once having acquired an incorrect style, it is a difficult thing to unlearn bad habits and begin aright."

"There are three things one must learn to play even an average game of billiards, making a correct bridge for all shots, holding the hand properly on the table with knuckles elevated and thumb extended. The cue, slipping easily between the hand and thumb, finds a solid resting place. This bridge I use most for the balk line nurse when the balls are close together and a delicate stroke is needed."

"Practice will serve to show how simple and effective is this manner of holding the cue. It gives perfect freedom of action and prevents a cramped movement."

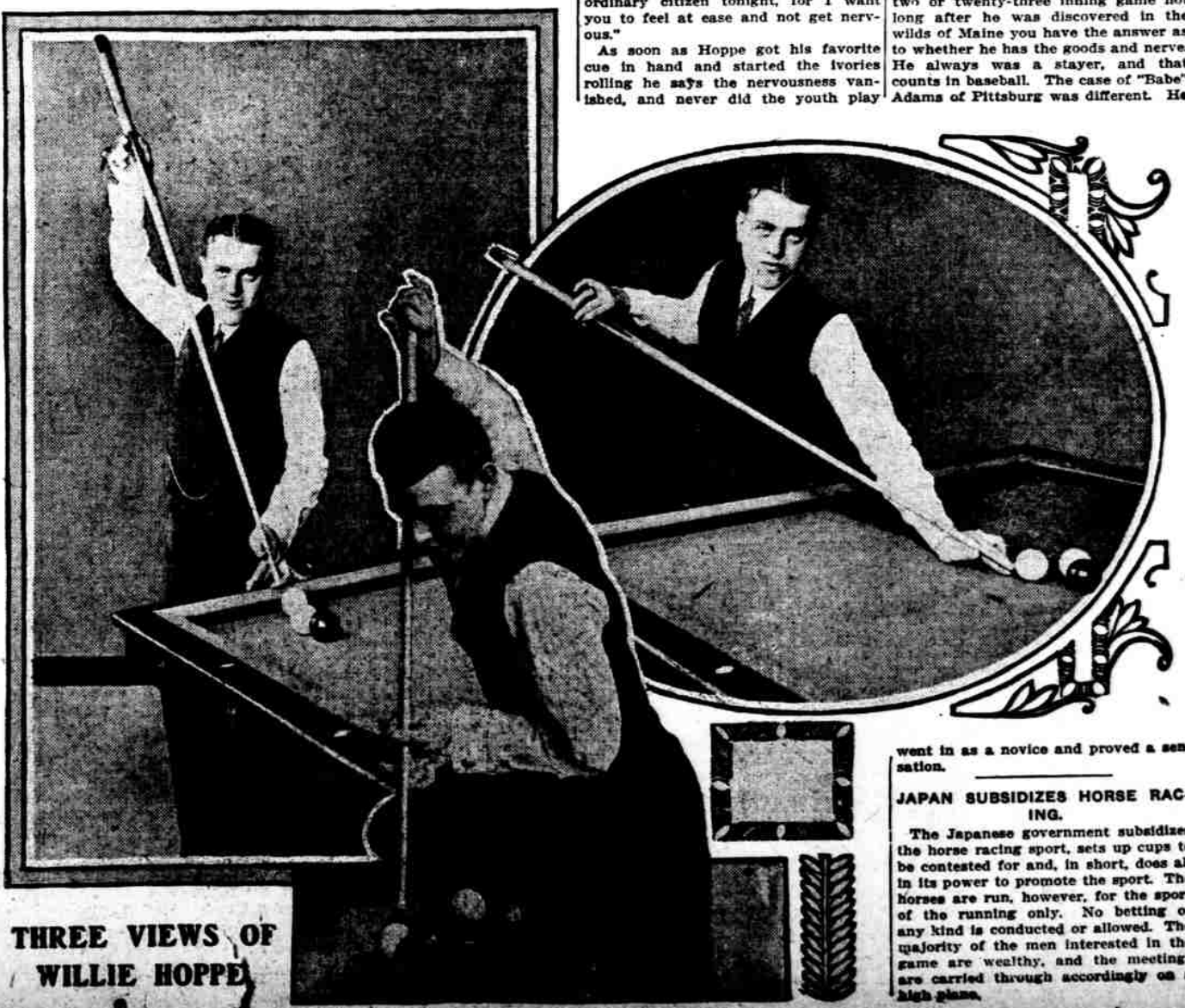
"Then there is the draw stroke bridge. It is made with the hand lying flat on the table, with the index finger around the cue shaft and touching the thumb in a very firm manner, so as to prevent the cue from taking an irregular stroke, which in offtimes caused by the executing hand. It will give the hand a firm setting and hold the cue in position for a terrific drive or a very heavy drawn shot strike, used for gathering the balls into position in most of the round the table shots."

"In addition is the bridge I use for close drawn shots when the balls are so near together that a broader bridge is impossible. Only a few inches of space are required, yet a strong, firm resting 'groove' for the cue is attained."

"While all of the bridges I have mentioned are regularly used by the advanced player, the third and fourth will serve the needs of the beginner. Never allow the bridge hand to become cramped. Never start a shot through or over the bridge hand. The whole game of billiards depends upon ease of movement."

JACK COOMBS NOT A NOVICE.

It is amusing to read some of the speculative junk about Pitcher Jack Coombs of the Philadelphia Athletics. What is the use of talking about him as if he were a novice? Before the season of 1910 he did good work. If you will just take the trouble to recall that Coombs beat Boston in a twenty-two or twenty-three inning game not long after he was discovered in the wilds of Maine you have the answer as to whether he has the goods and nerve. He always was a stayer, and that counts in baseball. The case of "Babe" Adams of Pittsburgh was different. He



THREE VIEWS OF WILLIE HOPPE

went in as a novice and proved a sensation.

JAPAN SUBSIDIZES HORSE RACING.

The Japanese government subsidizes the horse racing sport, sets up cups to be contested for and, in short, does all in its power to promote the sport. The horses are run, however, for the sport of the running only. No betting of any kind is conducted or allowed. The majority of the men interested in the game are wealthy, and the meetings are carried through accordingly on a high plane.